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YUGOSLAV TUG ENCOUNTERS
EXCESSIVE CUSTOMS MEASURES ON DANUBE

The following account of excessive Hungarian customs measures encountered by the Yugoslav steam tug Sabac was given by a Transylvanian river seaman of Hungarian descent.

The tug, which was towing six loaded barges through the Hungarian portion of the Danube to Vienna, was met at the Hungarian border and surrounded by four river patrol boats. A heavy machine gun mounted on each boat was kept trained on the tug, and the military personnel carried Soviet-type automatic rifles.

At Mohacs, a representative from the tug was rowed ashore, and escorted to and from the customhouse by an armed complement of 20 men. An escort of more than 20 police, customs officers, and soldiers rowed back to the tug with the Yugoslav representative. The minute customs examination of the tug and barges which followed was designed to provoke the tug's personnel to violence. The blue-uniformed river patrol, soldiers in yellow-green uniforms, and customs officers armed with pistols examined the crew's personal effects, including such things as matchboxes, personal letters and rolls of film, had barrels of drinking water emptied, inspected smokestacks, and all conceivable hiding places. The examination lasted 6½ hours. At night, the tug was allowed to proceed under the searchlights of the escorting patrol boats.

At Budapest, a Hungarian customs officer appeared at night to beg a loaf of bread for his children from the tug captain. The tug crew had to forego taking on water at Budapest, since it was impossible to do so in the 10 minutes allowed for this purpose.

Three days later, at Szob, instead of the usual rapid, formal inspection, the same 6-hour detailed examination was repeated.

The only examination performed on a Soviet tug which arrived with four barges at Szob consisted of a handshake between the Hungarian official and the Soviet commander.

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